and a user name associated with said at least one HVAC device which must be properly identified before requested status information can be accessed by the entry device;

querying said at least one HVAC device for status information when requested by a message from said entry device; and

sending said status information to said entry device in response to said querying means.

14.   (Amended) A method according to claim 13, further comprising the steps of:

checking for messages from said at least one HVAC device;

transferring said messages from said at least one HVAC device to said server; and

sending an alarm message from said server to said entry device when an alarm message is received from said at least one HVAC device.

--17.   The system of claim 1, wherein status information is stored in a first database and said password and user's name information is stored in a second database.

18.   The system of claim 12, wherein status information is stored in a first database and said password and user's name information is stored in a second database.--

REMARKS

Applicants' have carefully reviewed the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-16 as being anticipated by the cited Sandelman et al. reference. In response to the Office Action, Applicants' have brought the limitations of original claims 4 and 5 into independent claims 1, 12 and 13 and have canceled claims 4, 5, 15 and 16.

Applicants' present invention involves a system for remotely monitoring and controlling at least one, and preferably a large number of HVAC units that are under the supervision of a number of different entities. The system includes a server that

forms a communication link between remote HVAC units and any number of entry devices over various bi-directional communication links.

In order to insure the security of the HVAC equipment and to prevent communication errors from occurring, Applicants' server contains a first users database in which each users name is stored along with the users password and information concerning each piece of equipment under the control of the user. In order for the user to communicate with a particular piece of equipment the server is programmed to check the users name and password and if they match that set into the database the program further checks to see that the equipment to be accessed is part of the equipment associated with that particular user.

As illustrated in Fig. 7 of the instant drawings the server contains a further unit database that allows the user to call up machine condition settings, diagnostic data and provide the uer to change existing settings. The server is further programmed to periodically update the unit database and to alert the user in event an alarm condition is detected.

The Sandelman et al. reference describes a message delivery system for monitoring remote equipment such as heating and air conditioning equipment. Information from a series of sensors are sent to an interface having a logic controller that performs Boolean operations on the sensed data and forward the results to a server. If the server determines an exceptional condition exists, a message is transmitted to a user informing the user of the exceptional condition. Other messages of a non-exceptional nature are also sent to the user based on the data stored in the server. The disclosure in this reference states that the user can send commands via the internet to the equipment in the same manner that exception messages are sent via links 12a-d illustrated in Fig. 1 (see col. 9, lines 1-15). No attempt is made, however, to identify the user by a password and the specific users equipment before access to the equipment is permitted a user. Without the type of safeguard communication errors can occur accidently for example where a valid user sends a command message to a machine of another user. Similarly, without any safeguards, and someone that is not a user can easily gain access to the equipment and cause a great deal of potential harm.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the Sandelman et al. reference fails to provide the safeguards that are built into Applicants' system which are essential to adequately protect the users equipment that is monitored by this type of system. The Examiner is therefore respectfully requested to find the claim as amended allowable and to pass the case to issue.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned **"Version with markings to show changes made."**
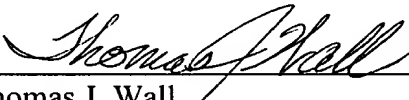
If the Examiner believes that contact with Applicant's attorney would be advantageous toward the disposition of this case, the Examiner is herein requested to call Applicant's attorney at the phone number noted below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0289.

Respectfully submitted,

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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

"VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

In the Claims:

Claims 4, 5, 15 and 16 have been canceled.

Claim 17 and 18 have been added.

Claims 1, 6, 12-14 have been amended as follows:

1.   (Amended) A system for remotely monitoring and controlling at least one HVAC device comprising:

a server with <u>bi-directional</u> communications access to an entry device and at least one HVAC device <u>and containing stored information relating to the status of</u> <u>said at least one HVAC device and further containing stored information that</u> <u>includes a password and a user name that are associated with said at least one HVAC</u> <u>device which must be properly identified before stored status information can be</u> <u>accessed by the entry device</u>;

querying means <u>in said server</u> for querying said at least one HVAC device for status information [on a regular basis when requested by a message from said entry device] <u>for storage in said server</u>; and

means for sending said status information to said entry device [in response to said querying] <u>when the message from said entry device includes a recognized</u> <u>password and user name associated with said at least one HVAC device</u>.

6.   (Amended) A system according to claim 4, further comprising means for automatically updating said [first database] <u>stored information</u> on a regular basis in the absence of said message for said entry device.

12.   (Amended) A system for remotely monitoring and controlling at least one HVAC device, comprising:

a server with <u>bi-directional</u> communications access to an entry device and said at least one HVAC device <u>and containing stored information relating to the</u> <u>status of at least one HVAC device and further containing stored information that</u> <u>includes a password and a user name associated with said at least one HVAC device</u> <u>which must be properly identified before stored status information can be accessed</u> <u>by the entry device</u>;

querying means <u>in said server</u> for querying said at least one HVAC device for status information [when requested by a message from said entry device] <u>for storage in said server</u>;

means for sending said status information to said entry device in response to said querying means;

means residing in said server for checking for messages from said at least one HVAC device;

means residing in said server for sending an alarm message to said entry device when an alarm message is received from said at least one HVAC device;

means for automatically sending alarm messages from said at least one HVAC device through said server to said entry device;

[a database in said server relating to a status of said at least one HVAC device;]

means for automatically updating said [database] <u>stored information</u> on a regular basis in the absence of said message form said entry device; and

means for changing settings on said at least one HVAC device from said entry device.

13.   (Amended) A method for remotely monitoring and controlling at least one HVAC device, comprising the steps of:

providing a server with <u>bi-directional</u> communications access to an entry device and said at least one HVAC device <u>and having a first database relating to the status of at least one HVAC device and a second database that includes a password and a user name associated with said at least one HVAC device which must be properly identified before requested status information can be accessed by the entry device</u>;

querying said at least one HVAC device for status information when requested by a message from said entry device; and

sending said status information to said entry device in response to said querying means.

14.   (Amended) A [system] <u>method</u> according to claim 13, further comprising the steps of:

checking for messages from said at least one HVAC device;

transferring said messages from said at least one HVAC device to said server; and

sending an alarm message from said server to said entry device when an alarm message is received from said at least one HVAC device.